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Searstan Family,
of Colchester, England.

LANDED AT PLYMOUTH, MAY 8th 1630.

Genealogical Notices. – *Morant's History of Essex - Halsted's History of Kent - Heralds Visitations - Sir Bernard Burke's Works and Somerby's Collections in England*

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Mr Sears will be obliged to
Mr Wm. H. Whitmore if he
will call at N° 42 Beacon St
tomorrow morng at 10 A.M. o'clk

Beacon Street June 26th
Friday —

Mr Sears does not know Mr Whitmores
address. —

Rec'd May 15-1879

Mr Sears' regards to Mr Whitmore Jun and thanks him for his diligent researches in genealogy, and for his minutes of the Records in relation to the Sallenstalls.

Mr S has a line of descent of this family, it is however in such a form as to render it inconvenient to hand about, but if Mr W will call at N° 42 Beacon St on any day between 9 & 11 o'clk in the morn, Mr S will be happy to show it to him.

Friday 2 Novem '55
Beacon Street.

Boston Jan 7 22d 1856

Mr W H Wilmore

Dear Sir

I thank you for the volume of Medford genealogies which you were kind enough to send me. I shall examine them with much pleasure.

Your zeal and industry of research do you great credit, and I hope may be a source of gratification to you, as they certainly will be of instruction and use to the community.

My grandson Fred'k Hunneville is well, and will return in March.

your humble servant

David Sears.

Monumental Memorial.

Richard Sears, son of John Bourchier Sears and Marie L. Van Egmont, in lineal descent from Richard Sears of Colchester and Ann Bourchier Knyvet – England – driven by persecution from his native land sought refuge among the Pilgrims in Holland.

He united with them in their bold attempt to find a home and a country in the New World landed at Plymouth in 1630 – married Dorothy Thacher – and died in Yarmouth in 1676.

I Knyvet Sears of Yarmouth, born 1635, married Elizath Dymoke, died 1686. Eldest son of the Pilgrim.

II Daniel Sears I of Chatham, born 1682, married Sarah Bawes, died 1756. Eldest son of Knyvet of Yarmouth.

III Daniel Sears II of Chatham, son of Daniel I of Chatham, born 1712, married Tean Freeman, died 1761. Grandson of Knyvet of Yarmouth.

IV David Sears I of Boston, son of Daniel II of Chatham, born 1752, removed to Boston 1770, married Ann Winthrop, died 1816. In lineal descent from Knyvet of Yarmouth, eldest son of the Pilgrim.

NOTICES

OF THE

SEARS FAMILY,

From Sir Bernard Burke's Works, and Somerby's Collections in England, &c. &c. &c.

English Ancestry.

Among the many ancient English families which emigrated to the New World, few can exhibit so clear and unbroken a chain of descent from the Patriarch in the Mother Country, as that of which we are about to treat. The early ancestry of most of our old houses is involved in doubt, but the researches of the antiquary and the genealogist—so actively prosecuted of late years—have tended materially to collect together the scattered fragments of family history, and to throw light on the obscurity of remote ages. In this respect the Sears have been peculiarly fortunate: their origin, their settlement in the County of Essex, their sufferings for the sake of religion, and their consequent migration to New England, are all clearly ascertained facts, proved by the most authentic evidence. The name in its onward course has undergone various

changes, as was always the case in those ages when there was no fixed mode of writing, and orthography depended in a great measure upon the ear and the fancy. In the present instance we find the patronymic spelt variously Sarre, Syer, Sayer and Sears; but the original name was SCEARSTAN, the the termination being Saxon.* Under that appellation the family first appears on English Record.

It is a curious fact that on the monumental memorials in the Churches of England, the name is sometimes differently written even in the same inscription. On the beautiful marble monument in the chancel of the Church of St. Peter's in Colchester, it is first spelt Seares, and afterwards Sayer.

The royal nuptials of Ethelred with his second Queen Elgiva, daughter of Richard of Normandy, were solemnized in 1002, and great was the magnificence of the ceremonial. Many Norman courtiers came in the train of the Princess, and others, led by the adventurous spirit of the age. Of these, several—and the ancestor of the Sears' among the rest—permanently established themselves in England, where for nearly half a century they had to

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* Scearstan, as Lingard writes it, or Scoreston, as Hume has it—a Village in the Isle of Alney, in the County of Gloucester, Eng.

encounter difficulties and vicissitudes, until the issue of the great conflict at Hastings transferred the country to the Norman rule.

Sare, or Sears, first occurs amongst the knights and liegemen at Scearstan, in Wessex, where Edmund, the son of Ethelred, encountered Canute, King of Denmark, and achieved a signal victory. This memorable battle is celebrated by the English annalists. It lasted two whole days; Canute retreated towards London, and after a fruitless attempt on the Metropolis, and a disastrous engagement at Brentford, succeeded in reaching Oxford, where he was again attacked by Edmund, and totally overthrown.

Early in the thirteenth century, the family of Sayers or Sears are found located in the vicinity of Colchester, Essex, possessed of considerable estates. The Saers for several centuries were residents in Pulham, St. Mary's. In 1490 JOHN SAER held the Lordship which continued in his descendants until 1770, when the then Lord of the Manor died without issue.

ADAM SARE, from whom descends the Colchester branch, died possessed of the Manor of Hougham, in the Barony of Chitham, in the County of Kent, in 1346. JOHN SEER, his great-grandson was one of the Barons returned to serve in Parliament for

the Town and Port of Sandwich, in the reign of Henry VI; and Thomas Syre, the youngest son of John was created a Banneret by Henry VII, after the battle of Stoke, in 1487.

Provinders was an ancient seat and residence of Thomas Sare in the reign of Elizabeth. This Queen also granted him the manor lands of Lenham.

The Manor of Woodscourt, in Baldesmere, was the residence of John Sayer of Teversham in 1517; and Garston in Walford, of Michael Sayer in the reign of Henry VIII.

In 1456, John Sayer, and on his decease, Matilda his wife had the sole wardship of Rochester Castle. This Castle was formerly of great importance, but from the time of Edward VI, it was allowed to fall to decay, and is now in ruins.

In 1340, the Sayers held land in the Ville of Lachindon in Essex, of the honor of Hugenet, of the King, in capite, and the Marches of the Abbess of Berking. These estates afterwards passed into the family of the Bourchiers, and were repurchased by the Searses in the reign of Elizabeth.

In 1577, George Seares of Colchester died in possession of the Abbots in Stanway, under trust for Richard Sayers in Holland. In the Inquisitions, post-mortem, this Manor is described as lying in Stanway, Fordham, Copsford and Lenham. It

descended as Bourchier Hall to Esther Sayer, fell into decay, and was divided and sold. The above Manor in the Doomsday survey, is called "Forheda," and then belonged to Richard, Earl Gislebert, originally the property of the Saxons Wisgar and Ulmar. This Richard Fitz Gislebert was Earl of Brion in Normandy, and Lord of the Manor of Clare in Suffolk. After passing through various proprietors—the Searses and the Bourchiers—it was finally forfeited to the Crown, and by Queen Elizabeth regranted to William, Marquis of Northhampton; and of him, it was purchased by George Seares, who paid ingress fine in the year 17 of her reign.

The Searstan family—traceable through its various changes of orthography, and from whom are descended the numerous branches above mentioned, resident in England—were also in remote times, the owners of the Manor of Sarre, the Ville de Sarre, and the Village of Sarre,—a part of the inheritance of the Crevequers.

The Ville de Sarre, or Serre, was originally a parish by itself, but is now included in that of St. Nicholas; it lies within the jurisdiction of Canterbury, and the Deanery of Westbere. In the reign of Henry III, a weekly market was granted to the Manor of Sarres, to be held on Thursday until the King should be of full age.

In 1320, William and John Sayer resided at Birch and Copford; and Mathew Sayer at Aldham, on lands afterwards held by the Bourchiers, with whom, as will be presently seen, they became connected. In 1348, William Sare was seated at Copford, and left at his decease, in 1350, a son, JOHN SAYER, of Copford, father of another JOHN SAYER, of Copford, whose son RICHARD SAYER, of Copford, died in 1367, having bequeathed to his son JOHN the family property in Copford, Aldham, Great Teye, Lexden, Colchester, &c. William Sayer, Grandson of this last named John, held, in 1471, the important office of Chatelain or Lieutenant of the Tower of London, and had under charge, but not under custody, Henry IV, then a prisoner, with an allowance for ten guards, from the 11th of May to the day of the unfortunate King's death and burial.

In the body of the Church of the Holy Cross, at West Gate, Canterbury, is an inscription on brass to John Syre, once Rector of this Church, 1436, ob.

In the reign of Henry VIII, William Sayer was Abbot of the Monastery or Priory of St. Mary the Virgin, and St. Thomas the Martyr, of Langdon, and also of the Convent of the order of Premonstranses, in the same place, which, after a struggle, was surrendered to the King and abolished. A pension was subsequently granted to the Abbot.

John Seyer was Vicar of Hitchen Church in 1332.

John Sire was Rector of Gilston Church in 1360.

John Sayere was Rector of Chisfield Church in 1354.

Thomas Sayer was Rector of Aldbury Church in 1396.

Robert Syres was Rector of Benger Church in 1457.

Joseph Sayer was Rector of St. Mary's Church, Burkhamstead, in 1664.

On the east side of the north transept of the Church of St. Mary, in Burkhamstead, is a chapel of an oblong form, with ranges of octagonal pillars supporting a stone ceiling, vaulted, and with groined arches. The northern half of this chapel is enclosed with rails. In the middle is an altar tomb, of black and white marble, to the memory of John Sayer, who in 1681, bequeathed a thousand pounds sterling for the building and maintaining an almshouse. On the west side of the tomb are the arms of the Sears family, with a rose on the cheveron royally crowned; on the south side is a long inscription in Latin commemorating the virtues of the deceased.

In the chancel of the Church of St. Peters in Colchester, is a handsome marble monument, and in the body of the Church several brass tablets, to various members of the Sears family, with the family arms and suitable inscriptions.

For a long succession of years the Sayers may be traced as holding the highest offices in the Corporation of Colchester, and retaining most extensive influence, as may be inferred from the frequent mention of them in the town records. About the close of the fifteenth century, JOHN SAYER held the office of Alderman of Colchester, a dignity at that time of great importance attached to cities, somewhat similar and next in rank to the still more ancient title of Ealdorman, attached to manors, but exempted from military service. An honor of this kind vouches for the wealth and character of the individual bearing it, as well as for the esteem he enjoyed of his fellow citizens. JOHN SAYER died in 1509, and was buried in St. Peter's Church under the south aisle, a mural brass recording, in old English letters, his name and honors. By Elizabeth, his wife, who died in 1530, he had three sons, JOHN, Robert and George. The eldest,

JOHN SAYER, Esq., of Colchester, died in 1562, and was buried near his father, with a similar brass memorial. He left two sons, viz.:—

I. RICHARD, his heir.

II. George, who obtained possession of the family inheritance in consequence of the flight of his elder brother to Holland. He died in 1577, and was buried with his ancestors in St.

Peter's Church, Colchester. A beautiful marble monument, erected to his memory in the South aisle of the Chancel, bears a quaint epitaph. His descendant and eventual heiress, Esther Sayer, *m.* Sir John Marsham.

The elder son,

Richard Sayers, Esq., born in Colchester, A. D. 1508, *m.* Anne Bourchier, dau. of Edmund Knyvet, Esq., of Ashwellthorpe, co. Norfolk, by Jane Bourchier his wife, dau. and heir of John, second Lord Berners, which Edmund Knyvet was second son of Sir Edward Knyvet, of Buckenham Castle, representative of the ancient and distinguished family of Knyvet.

This Colchester branch of the family is descended from Adam Sare, of the Manor of Sarres, in the Diocese of Canterbury, and of Hougham, and the Barony of Cetcham, now Chatham, in Kent.

It was during the time of this Richard Sayers, that religious animosities and religious persecutions, excited by the violence of Henry VIII, and other concurrent causes, attained their height. Unfortunately for his worldly peace and prosperity, Richard Sayers became a warm and zealous partizan on the side opposed to his own relatives, as well as to the existing Government, and found it prudent to escape with his wife and other refugees, to Holland, where

he settled at Amsterdam. This was in the year 1537. His brother George, in consequence, secured for himself possession of the patrimonial inheritance.

Richard Sayers died at Amsterdam in 1540, leaving an only son,

John Bourchier Sears, born in 1528, who became at the death of his grandfather, John Sayer of Colchester, heir to the family estates in Essex, but the same difficulties that forced his father to quit England, still existed in full force, and he was excluded from the succession. Nor do we find that the youthful heir made any effort to regain his ancestral rights. Of a bold and adventurous disposition, he preferred to seek renown for himself by his own exertions, and accompanied his father-in-law, Sir John Hawkins, in several of his voyages. He remained consequently a banished man, and died in Holland, leaving, by Elizabeth Hawkins his wife, four sons, John, Henry, William and Richard. Of these, the eldest,

John Bourchier Sears, born at Amsterdam in 1561, married Marie L., daughter of Philippe Van Egmonde, of that city, and acquired with her a large fortune, principally in money. With this he was enabled to purchase property in England, adjoining the lands which he hoped soon to recover as his lawful patrimony. Amongst the estates thus bought,

were Bourchier and Little Fordham Manors, both of which had, in former times, belonged to his ancestors. But his return to England was resisted by those who were deeply interested in keeping at a distance so formidable a claimant to many of their broad acres. Strenuous and energetic were the efforts John Bourchier Sears made to remove the obstacles which intervened to keep him in exile; but all to no purpose. His opponents were inexorably hostile, and even threatened him with a prosecution, as a participator in the Gunpowder Plot, if he ventured to set foot in England.

The attainder, it must be remembered, which hung over his grandfather, had never been removed, and still impended over the family at the time of his death in 1629. By Marie Van Egmonde, his wife, John Bourchier Sears left issue, RICHARD, John, Marie and Jane; the three latter returned to England, and settled in Kent.

Richard, feeling that he was driven by persecution from his native land, sought refuge among the Puritans at Leyden; and in 1630 united with them in their bold attempt to find a home and a country in the New World.

American Ancestry.

Richard Sears, the eldest son of John Bourchier Sears, and founder of the American Line, worn out by his parents' want of success in their endeavors to recover their English possessions, determined at his father's death, to quit Europe for ever. He accordingly took passage, with a party of Puritans, for New England, in America, and landed at Plymouth on the eighth day of May, 1630. That he met with the usual vicissitudes that tried the patience and the courage of all the early settlers, can hardly be doubted; but he remained firm to his purpose, made himself a home in his new country, and shortly after his arrival, married Dorothy Thacher. In 1643, he removed to Yarmouth, and in 1662 we find him elected to the Colony Court of Plymouth. He died in 1676, leaving behind him three sons,

I. Knyvet, as follows.

II. Paul, of whose line we treat.

III. Sylas, who died in Yarmouth, 1697.

Knyvet Sears, the eldest son, unlike his father, had a strong faith that the family lands in England might yet be recovered. He was in the glow of youth, had experienced none of the proverbial delays and quibbles of English law, and accordingly

set out for the old country, full of hope, and furnished with such deeds and documents as seemed, to him at least, to place his claim beyond question. He was kindly received by some of his relations, but he was not successful in the object of his visit. Yet this failure could not subdue his hopes or his spirits. He made a second voyage in 1686, but in the same year, and before he had time to bring forward the proofs in his possession, he died at the residence of his relative Catherine, (subsequently Baroness Berners,) daughter of Sir John Knyvet, and wife of John Harris, Esq. The evidences that he brought with him, were never afterwards recovered.

From a document filed in the Chapter House, Westminster Abbey, it appears that the contested manors were transferred about this time, by a legal fiction, to Sir John Marsham, only son of Sir John Marsham, and Esther, daughter of George Sayer, a descendant of the George Sayer who died in 1577. This Esther assumed to be sole heir, upon the failure of the male line in England; and the rights which the American branch of the family was entitled to hold there, were abandoned for ever.

Previous to his visit to England, Knyvet Sears married Elizabeth Dimoke, by whom he had two sons, Daniel and Richard, who were adopted by their uncle, Paul Sears, and brought up as his children.

Pilgrim Monument

AT YARMOUTH.

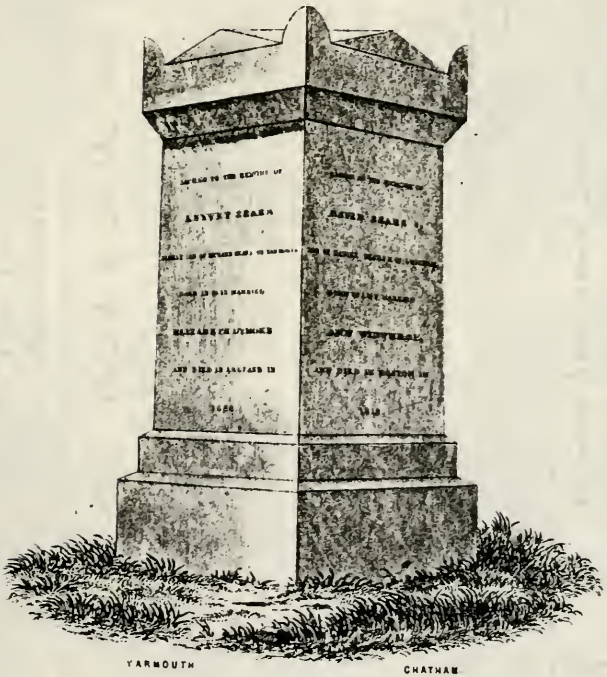
SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
RICHARD SEARS,
SON OF JOHN BOURCHIER SEARS AND
MARIE L. VAN EGMONT,
IN LINEAL DESCENT FROM
RICHARD SEARS OF COLCHESTER
AND ANN BOURCHIER KNYVET,
ENGLAND.
HE LANDED AT PLYMOUTH IN 1630.
MARRIED DOROTHY THACHER,
AND DIED IN YARMOUTH IN
1676.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
KNYVET SEARS,
ELDEST SON OF RICHARD SEARS OF YARMOUTH
BORN IN 1635, MARRIED
ELIZABETH DYMOKE,
AND DIED IN ENGLAND IN
1686.

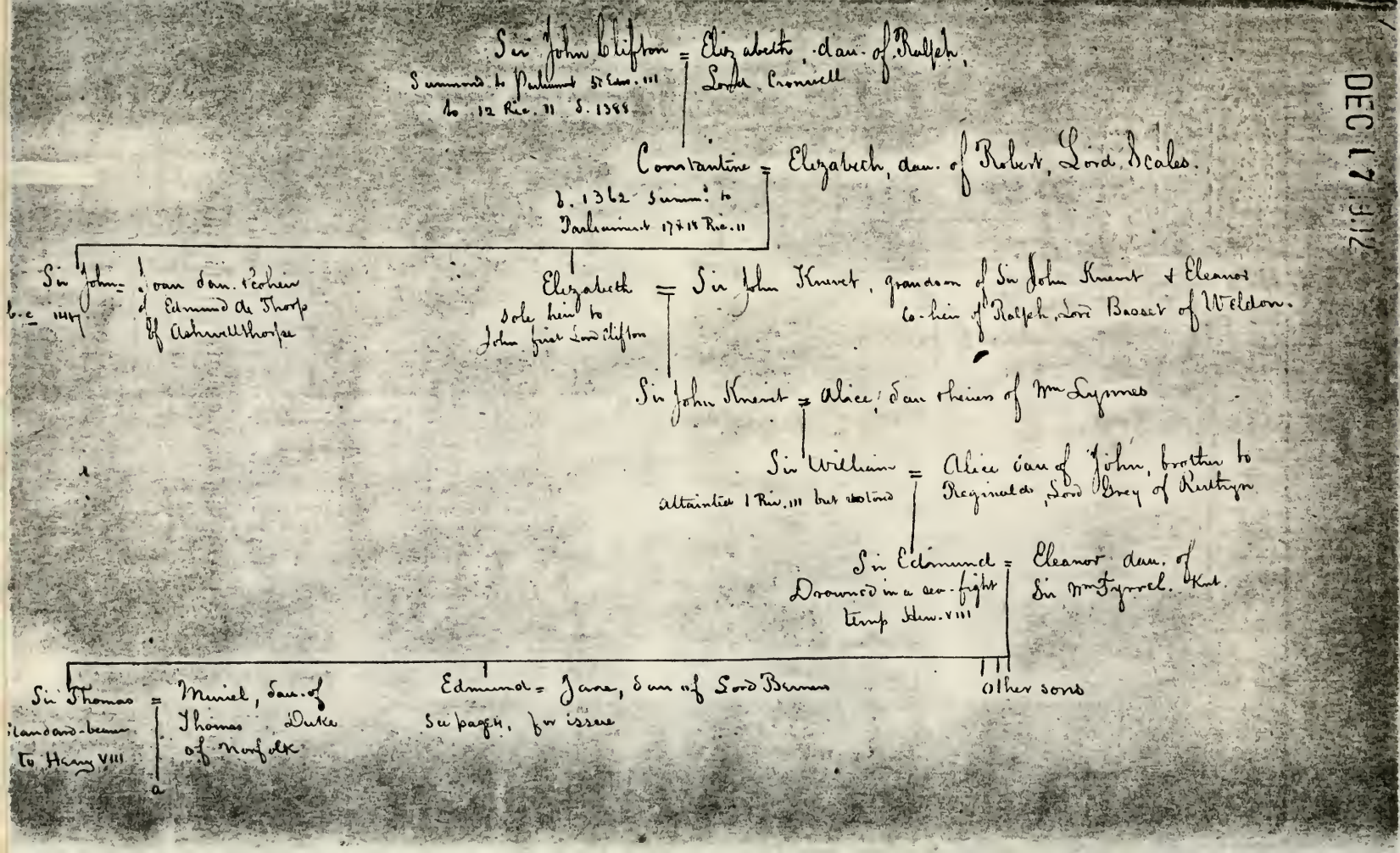
SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
PAUL SEARS,
SECOND SON OF RICHARD SEARS,
BORN IN 1637, MARRIED
DEBORAH WILLARD,
AND DIED IN YARMOUTH IN
1707.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
SYLAS SEARS,
THIRD SON OF RICHARD SEARS.
BORN IN 1639, MARRIED

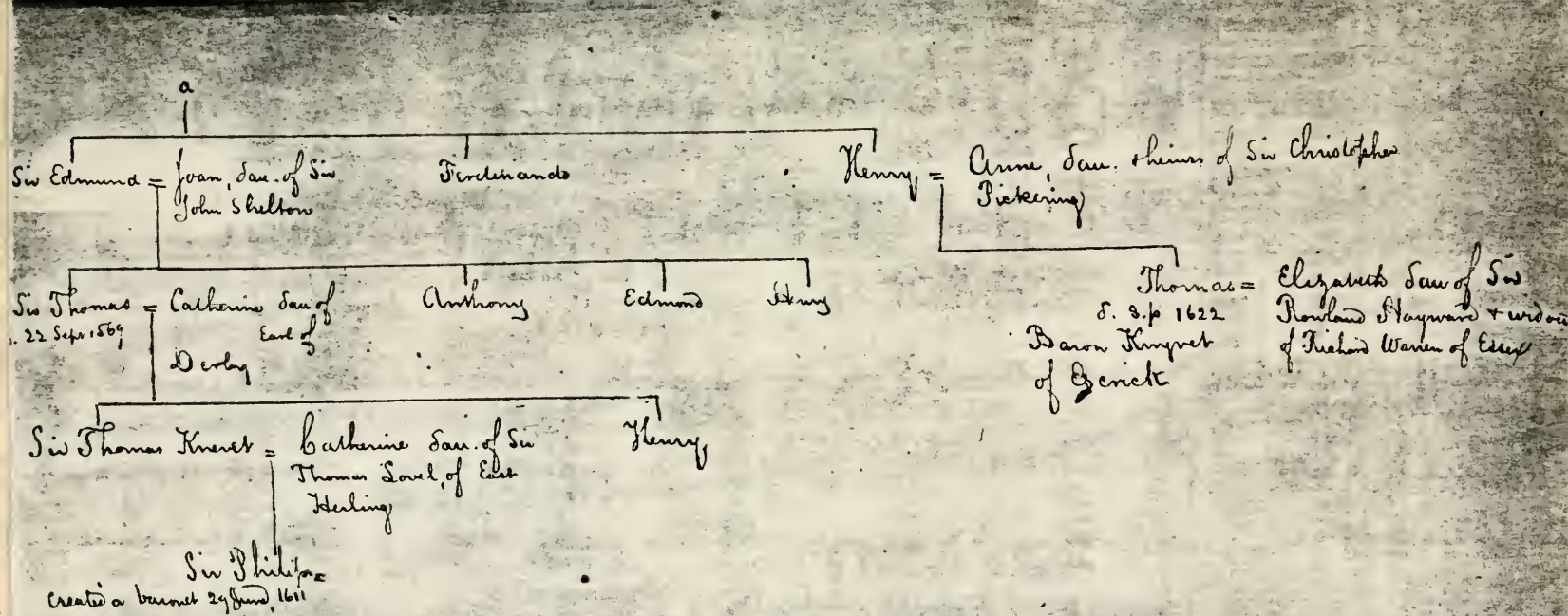
AND DIED IN YARMOUTH IN
1697.



MONUMENTS OF THE SEARS FAMILY
IN THE
GRAVEYARDS OF YARMOUTH AND CHATHAM.


Sir John Clifton = Elizabeth, dau. of Ralph,
Summond to Parliament 51 Edw. III to 12 Ric. II 8. 1388
Lord Cromwell
Constantine = Elizabeth, dau. of Robert, Lord Scales.
b. 1362 Summ.d to Parliament 17 & 18 Ric. II
Sir John = Joan dau. & coheir of Edmund de Thorp of Ashwellthorpe
d. c. 1404
Elizabeth = Sir John Knevet, grandson of Sir John Knevet & Eleanor co-heir of Ralph, Lord Basset of Weldon.
sole heir to John first Lord Clifton
Sir John Knevet = Alice, dau. & heiress of Mr Lygmes
Sir William = Alice dau. of John, brother to Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthyn
attainted 1 Ric. III but restored
Sir Edmund = Eleanor dau. of Sir Mr Tyrrel. Kt.
Drowned in a sea-fight temp Henr. VIII
Sir Thomas = Muriel, dau. of Thomas Duke of Norfolk
Standard-bearer to Henry VIII
a
Edmund = Jane, dau. of Lord Berners
See page 4, for issue
other sons

DEC 17 1912


a
Sir Edmund = Joan, dau. of Sir John Shelton
Ferdinando
Henry = Anne, dau. & heiress of Sir Christopher Pickering
Sir Thomas = Catherine dau. of Earl of Derby
Anthony
Edmund
Henry
Thomas = Elizabeth dau. of Sir Rowland Hayward & widow of Richard Warren of Essex
d. 22 Sept. 1569
d. s.p. 1622
Baron Kinpet of Berwick
Sir Thomas Knevet = Catharine dau. of Sir Thomas Lovel, of East Hendred
Henry
Sir Philip
created a baronet 29 June, 1611

Edward Knyvet, of Wheatlesthorpe = Jane, dau. & heiress of John Bouchier, Lord Berners; she d. Feb. 17, 1561

Ann = Richard Sayers.

John Bouchier Sears = Elizabeth, dau. of Sir John Wentworth

John = Agnes, dau. of Sir John Harcourt of Stanton Harcourt, Co Oxford.
s. attainted

John Bouchier = Marie L van Egmont.

Richard = Dorothy Thatcher.

Knyvet = Elizabeth Dymoke.

Daniel = Fear Freeman.

David = Ann Winthrop.

David = Miriam Mason.

Thomas = Muriel, dau. of Sir Thos Perry.
d. 9 Feb 1607

Thomas = Catherine, dau. of Thomas, Lord Burgh.
s. 30 June 1658

John = Mary dau. of Sir Thos. Bedingfield.
(line extinct) d July 28, 1679

Thomas
s 1693

Catherine.
s. Nov 23, 1743.
[see next page]

Thomas = Emma, dau of Thos Hayward.
s. 1656

John = Lucy, dau of Charles Suckling of Brakendale, Co Norfolk
d 1731

Elizabeth = Sir Henry Wilson, of Heigham + Didlington, Co Norfolk.
d. 1757

Henry W. = Mary, dau. of Sir J. Miller.
d. Sept. 6, 1796

Robert, Lord Berners.
Allegiance terminated 8 May 1832.

x = Sir Martin Sedley, of Morley.

Muriel = Brampton Gurdon of Assington.

Muriel = Richard Saltonstall

Nathaniel = Elizabeth Ward

Gurdon = Gov. Conn.

In 1717 Mrs. Catherine Bokenham claimed the barony of Berners, stating that Sir John Bouchier, Knight of the garter was summoned to parliament 33 Henry VI as a baron. That John Bouchier, his ultimate heir, was also summoned as Lord Berners & dying in 1532 left sole surviving issue, Jane who married Edmund Knyvet, Esq, whose grandson their Thomas Knyvet, claimed the said title & dignity 14 Junes 1. That it was adjuged him by a report of of the Lords Commissioners for the office of Earl Marshal, but that he dies before the King confirmed the report.

That the petitioners brother Thomas, was heir, but he dying without issue, as dyed her sister, she became heir to the barony.

The house resolved that she was entitled to the said barony.

She married first John Harris, Esq, & secondly Richard Bokenham, & d. 2 p. Nov 23, 1743.

In 1578 in her progress through Suffolk & Norfolk Queen Elizabeth knighted Thomas Knyvet of Ashwell Thorpe, a gentleman of great worth, much beloved for his hospitality & good nature.

Nichols Progresses of Q. Eliz. II. 244

See also Blomfield, V. 153

Sir Thomas Knyvet of Norfolk was knighted May 11, 1603, and in his case at Stannells the Lady Mary was entombed. He was created Baron Knyvet of Escrick in Yorkshire, July 7, 1607 & d. s.p. 1622. He has a monument in Stannells church with kneeling effigies of himself & lady, of which a view is engraved in the Gentleman's Magazine for April 1791.

Lady Knyvet was Elizabeth, dau. of Sir Rowland Hayward, Alderman of London, widow of Richard Warren Esq of Essex. She died in King St. Westminster about a month after her husband.

Ashwellthorp.

Jane Knyvet. resteth here, the only heire by right
Of the lord Berners, that Sir John BOURCHER hight.
Twenty yeres and three a wydows life she ledd,
Alwayes kepyng howse where riche and poor were fedd.
Sentell. iust, quyet, voyd of debate and stryfe;
Euer doyng good: so thus she ledd her life,
Euen to the graue, where erth on erth doth ly:
On whos soul GOD graunt of his abundant mercy.
The XVII of February M. D. lxi.

Weever's Antient Funeral Monuments
p. 539.

2042544

See page 13.

Of these sons of Knyvet Sears
Richard d. in 1718; his issue is extinct.
Daniel the Elder son, born ca 1682
lived at Chatham. By his wife he had
I Daniel, his heir
II Richard Killed at Culloden
III David " " ".

Daniel born in 1712 m Fear Freeman
& had
I Richard, a Mass. Senator m. Polly Marshall
& had three sons, Richard, Daniel
& Marshall, who all d. s.p.
II David, of whom presently
III Daniel d. s.p.

David Sears, b. 1703 bought lands in
Maine under the Maine Patent; m. Ann
Winthrop, & had an only son

David Sears, b. 1787 m. Miriam - Clarke
dau. of Hon Jonathan Mason & has had
I David d. young
II Anna - Powell - Mason. m. Wm Amory
III Harriet - Elizabeth - Dickeson m. G. Caspar Crowninshield
IV Cordelia - Mason d. unm.
V Ellen " Gonsalve Grandi d' Haubersart
VI David " Emily E. Knyvet.
VII Frederick - Richard m. Marian Shaw
VIII Winthrop d. young
IX Grace - Winthrop m. Wm C. Rives, Jr.
X Knyvet - Winthrop.

To the Historian Esq

Dear Sir,

I received
your note of the last, and
am obliged to you for
your kind suggestions
in to my family pedigree.
I have already known
my papers the under
pedigree, which from
so interesting a branch
of it, and should have
included it in the sketch
about to be published, but
was obliged to confine
myself to certain limits

Send immediately to
the trade Mark of
the Substitute Food
I hope very soon to
be able to resume Systematic
Calls for the Amount
Amount of Interest
which is in my possession
and shall then Most
gladly hasten the
Glad Day blood King Cure
Most Excellent Remedy
which I can recommend
I Express thanks for
for your kind attention
and am
Very Respectfully Yours
Dr. Abbott
Sole Proprietor Substitute

42 Bond St. Lond
May 8th 1857

A Reminiscence. The demolition of the Commercial Coffee House in Milk street, will cause the recollection of many a "down easter" to revert to times past, when it was managed by their old friend Merriam, assisted by Alderman Longley. A quarter of a century since, the Commercial stood among the No. 1 houses of the city. Although the changes in our good city have been great, yet in nothing, perhaps, has it been greater or more observable than in the character of our public houses. It would be interesting to trace them down from the ancient and first opened house of entertainment in the town by Master Cole in 1634, to the present time. Could we but imagine the appearance of that primitive "ordinary" (as they were first called), situated on Merchants' Row, it would probably bear about as much resemblance to the present houses as the first [illegible] opened by John Coggan, on the north-eastern corner of State and Washington streets, does to the granite building recently erected there. In 1655 there was a noted tavern at the North End called the "Noah's Ark," not an inappropriate name for some at the present day in that location; after this we find the "King's Arms," "White Lion," "Oliver Cromwell," &c. The regulations enacted by our ancestors for the management of taverns, show them to have been at that time of importance. We have before us a small pamphlet entitled "A serious address to those who unnecessarily frequent the tavern, and often spend the evening in public houses," put forth by Cotton Mather and twenty-two others of the clergy, and discussed by them in a style which proves by the warnings and admonitions administered, that "Maine Law" was not then, any more than at the present time, the order of the day in the public houses. The statute books are full of enactments relating to them and their visitors.

In the Centinel of April 15, 1820, is an advertisement by the heirs of Uriah Cotting, of the sale of the lease by auction of the Commercial Coffee House for 497 years from the 8th day of October, 1818, as stipulated in the lease made by David Sears to Uriah Cotting, deceased, and subject to a payment to the said Sears in quarter yearly payments of 35 tons of wheat or Indian corn per annum,—which condition has been changed to the payment in pure gold in lieu of said wheat or Indian corn, at the option of the lessee, until 1840, which is equal to $900 per annum, and which must be paid by the purchaser to the said Sears, &c." The whole estate was then under lease for $2485.

The leases of the estates on Market street—now Cornhill—extending from Franklin avenue to Court street on both sides, belonged to the same estate and were subject to the same conditions,—the rent being payable in old sable iron, subject to the privilege of being changed to payment in gold bullion. The buildings erected the past and present season on the south side of Cornhill, called "Sears's Crescent," occupy a part of this estate.